

**Living in the Spirit**  
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**Faith Declaration**

*We believe that the pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire is obtainable by a definite act of appropriating faith on the part of the fully cleansed believer, and the initial evidence of the reception of this experience is speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance .<sup>1</sup>*

**Bible Focus**

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” —Galatians 5:25

**Lesson Objective**

To discover the purpose of spiritual gifts in the church and learn to walk in the Spirit.

**Global Outreach Emphasis**

The church is effective in ministry as Christians discover, develop, and deploy their spiritual gifts.

**What’s This Lesson About?**

Learn the three **D’s: Discover, Develop, and Deploy**. That’s what it’s about when it comes to serving Christ through His Church. Many people who have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit and attend Pentecostal churches thought that living a Spirit filled life meant only speaking in tongues and living a moral life.

Some people have not understood, nor even been taught, about the ultimate purposes of spiritual gifts in the life of the believer and the community of faith. In this lesson you will **Discover** that the Bible has much to tell us about effective Christian living. This knowledge will help you **Develop** the spiritual gifts you have as a child of God. Finally, in the context of a worshiping, loving, and obedient community of faith, you will find the ministry of being **Deployed** for service in your spiritual gifts.

What? You don’t think you have any spiritual gifts? When the Holy Spirit made you alive in Christ, you became the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19). You’re still not sure? Don’t worry. As you study this lesson, you will find direction regarding God’s plan for you!

**The Power of the Word**

1. The Purpose of Tongues (1 Corinthians 14:1-5)

1 Corinthians 14:1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

5 I wish you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

There are three ways that speaking in tongues is described in the New Testament. The first is the evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (discussed in Lesson 9). The Holy Spirit speaks through us as a personal and public witness of His presence empowering us in our service for Christ.

The second use, the gift of tongues, is described in 1 Corinthians 14. It is the use of tongues as a special manifestation of the Spirit within the context of the community of faith. Such a message should be interpreted and not left unintelligible to the hearers.<sup>2</sup> The reason for this is obvious. If people are constantly speaking in unknown tongues, no one will understand what God is seeking to do. That is why Paul preferred prophecy, that is, speaking God's truth in the language of the listeners, over uncontrolled speaking in tongues. Paul did not reject the use of tongues in the worship service; but he did insist that tongues spoken by an individual should be interpreted or the tongues speaker should keep the message to himself (1 Corinthians 14:27, 28).<sup>3</sup>

The third use is speaking in tongues in personal prayer, praise, and song to the Lord. Paul referred to this in 1 Corinthians 14:15 and indicates that there are appropriate times in the worshiping community and in our own personal lives to pray and sing in unknown tongues. These tongues do not require interpretation because they function for the edification of the speaker or as expressions of Spiritled intercession (Romans 8:26, 27).<sup>4</sup>

2. Gifts of the Spirit (Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:27-31; Ephesians 4:11-16)

**Romans 12:6** Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;

7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;

8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

**1 Corinthians 12:27** Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?

30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

**Ephesians 4:11** And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things unto Him who is the head—Christ—

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

There are three main ways that spiritual gifts are used in the church.<sup>5</sup> First, Ephesians 4 announces the equipping gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor-teachers.<sup>6</sup> These gifts are the foundational leadership gifts of the Christian church. These are people whom God calls and equips for the purpose of equipping His people in the church so they can do the work of ministry. Perhaps this is the greatest contribution of the modern Pentecostal/charismatic movement: the rediscovery that pastors and evangelists (and the other equipping gift offices) are not the ministers of the church, but they equip people to minister in order to edify the body of Christ.

Second, Romans 12 gives the body ministry gifts. Every believer at conversion is given one or more of these gifts. These are the gifts enabling the church to be the church in practical, daily worship of God and service to humanity. They are often related to one's talents and abilities in life.

Third, 1 Corinthians 12, while including some of the equipping gifts, also includes manifestation gifts of tongues, interpretation, healings, etc. While God may use certain individuals more than others in these gifts, these gifts should not glorify the individual but are manifestations of divine majesty, power, and grace.

### 3. The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25)

**Galatians 5:22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit can be described as the personality of Jesus reflected in human hearts. It is true that we have this treasure in earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7); but transformation of the human heart through the presence of the Holy Spirit is greater than the weaknesses of human flesh. That's why Galatians 5 is about attitudes of the heart reflecting genuine love for God and our neighbor.

The gifts of the Spirit are for building up the body of Christ and making the church more effective in reaching a hurting world. The gifts are not trophies of personal achievement, pride, or self-promotion, nor indications that one Christian is better than another Christian. The fruit of the Spirit provides the personal context of genuine love, patience, hope, and care for one another.

Remember that it is the *fruit* (singular) of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5. These nine fruit are actually dimensions of the one fruit of the life of Jesus in us. This is not a buffet of spiritual goodies from which we pick and chose. As we surrender ourselves to Christ each day, He will bring this fruit to greater maturity in our lives.

### **Global Outreach Emphasis**

*The church is effective in ministry as Christians discover, develop, and deploy their spiritual gifts.* Spiritual gifts are the tools the Lord gives us as He uses us to further the cause of the Great Commission. Every Christian, at various stages of life, is gifted for the purpose God has ordained for each believer. The active young Christian is gifted to meet the opportunities of his generation. The middle-aged Christian has maturity, experience, and perhaps additional finances that the Spirit uses in the church. The senior adult, perhaps confined to home due to poor health, is still gifted for usefulness to the church through time for concentrated intercessory prayer.

## Word Power

### THE GREATEST GIFT

1 Corinthians 12 is the apostle Paul's discussion of various spiritual gifts and their relationship to the body of Christ. The apostle left no doubt that gifts are meant to build the church as people serve the cause of Christ together. While some gifts may bring greater visibility, no person is greater than another in relation to God's purposes for us.

1 Corinthians 14 is Paul's discussion of how two specific, more visible gifts, tongues and prophecy, are meant to function in the church. His guidelines are practical and serve to reinforce the principles established in 1 Corinthians 12.

But between those chapters is the Great Love Chapter of the Bible, 1 Corinthians 13. The context could not be more appropriate. Paul's poem to divine love is set within the context of spiritual gifts. Love is the "more excellent way" of the gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31). Love is the greatest gift to be pursued with all eagerness and desire (1 Corinthians 14:1).

Living in the Spirit means to live in the power and presence of Christ's love. All our gifts, sermons, giving, worship, and anything else associated with church are in vain if we have not love. The absence of love negates the righteous and eternal impact of our lives.

There's no doubt that God wants us to *serve* in the power of the *gifts* of the Spirit. But more importantly, God wants us to *live* in the power of His wondrous *love*.

### ENDNOTES

1. This Faith Declaration is the same as in Lesson 9. It is repeated here as the basis for further understanding of the Pentecostal experience in the Christian life.
2. The word *interpret* does not mean *translation*. The interpretation may be longer, or shorter, in actual time than the message in tongues. The Spirit gives the interpretation so that people may understand what He is saying to the church at that given time. Unless a human foreign language is spoken and someone in the church who speaks that language can *translate*, most manifestations of tongues are meant to be *interpreted*; that is, the essence, or spirit, of the message is given in the known language of the hearers.
3. It may surprise you to realize that the apostle Paul knew that spiritual gifts, especially manifestation gifts like tongues, should be used wisely in conjunction with human will and order in the church. Paul told the Corinthians that if one of them had a message in tongues, but knew no one was present to interpret, that person should keep it to himself in private prayer. That is not a sign of disobedience; rather, it is a sign of submission to authority and recognizing the place of order in the church.
4. Many commentators believe that Paul is describing speaking in tongues in Romans 8:26, 27. This is the common Pentecostal interpretation. This means that such prayer, while not intelligible to the speaker or any hearer present, is

nonetheless prayer in the will of God. It is the Spirit praying through us to the Father and Son in perfect accord.

5. B. E. Underwood, *Spiritual Gifts: Ministries and Manifestations* (Franklin Springs, GA; Advocate Press [now LifeSprings Resources], 1984). While there are many excellent books on the market, Underwood's insights reflect the traditional Pentecostal perspective, provide a readable way of understanding spiritual gifts, and discuss how they operate in the church and individuals. Use this book as an elective study for a class or congregation to discover, develop, and deploy its spiritual gifts.

6. Some commentators separate pastors and teachers into a fourth and fifth equipping gift. The syntax points to pastors and teachers as one primary gift; however, it is not inappropriate to think of Bible teachers and theologians as equipping teachers of the church.